

**BOARD OF FORESTRY AND FIRE PROTECTION**

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November 2, 2016

The Honorable Ron Wyden  
221 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510  
Attn: Wesley Look

**Re: Support for 10-Year All Lands Pilot Project Initiative**

Dear Senator Wyden:

This correspondence is to confirm support from the California Board of Forestry and Fire Protection for the All Lands approach to forest fuels treatment as outlined in the Resilient Forests Pilot Project Initiative. Congress mandated an All Lands approach in the Federal Land Assistance, Management and Enhancement Act of 2009. This is further codified in the National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy (USDOI, USDA 2014).

The Board applauds your leadership role to address the hazardous conditions that currently exist across forest and range lands in the West. It is clear that ecologically based vegetation management activities conducted using an All Lands approach is a preferred strategy, one that is most likely to succeed in mitigating wildfire behavior on a landscape scale.

California is currently in the sixth year of a devastating drought that has impacted forest ecosystems in the Sierra Nevada Range to the point where over 65 million trees are known to be dead. Proactive solutions such as the pilot project legislation are critical to address the landscape-scale issues such as tree mortality and overstocked forests that land managers in California and the Inland West are currently facing.

Fire suppression costs have been increasing in recent years, with approximately \$960 million spent in fiscal year 15/16 between CAL FIRE and USFS within the State of California alone. This allocation of funding for suppression costs, particularly at the federal level, leaves little funding for forest treatments that remove overgrown brush and trees on federal lands. This is a trend that is not sustainable. Land managers have very limited disposal options for the thousands of tons of excess forest biomass that is generated annually as a byproduct of forest thinning, range restoration and commercial forest management activities. In California (and many western states) the recent downturn in the biomass power sector has severely reduced disposal options for land managers. Most of the excess biomass is now piled and burned, thus generating significant quantities of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions (e.g., black carbon, CO<sub>2</sub>, CO).

The Resilient Forests Pilot Project initiative will create a market solution for treating targeted at-risk landscapes that demonstrates alternative methods of utilizing waste material while reducing air emissions (including GHG), creating jobs in rural communities and producing renewable low carbon transportation fuels.

Sincerely,

Keith Gilless, Chair  
California Board of Forestry and Fire Protection

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